

# SWVTC UPDATE



## Employee Events Committee Sponsors Appreciation Day

By Deborah Lowe

The Employee Events committee surprised employees Wednesday, April 9 with a special spring event. The committee's goal was to show appreciation for the difference that each employee of SWVTC makes in the work they do here.

Members of the events committee awaited employees literally in the road as they entered the Center for work. Everyone was shocked and then relieved to learn that it was not a disaster, a license check, or any such catastrophe; but simply the committee's way to personally thank them for the work they do. The events committee members gave each employee a package of two cookies and a card that they can display in their office or work area. The theme of the event was, "Making a Difference." And truly, **you** do make a difference, every day.

## Bulletin Board

May 9  
Greenhouse Sale  
Open to Public

Employee Picnic  
June 11

Blood Drive  
May 1

Health Benefits  
Open Enrollment  
April 16 – May 16

National Employee  
Health & Fitness Day  
Group Walk  
May 20, 21, 22

## 2008 Open Enrollment

### for Health Benefits and Flexible Reimbursement Accounts

April 16—May 16, 2008

Open Enrollment is your chance every year to enroll in or change your health plan, add or remove family members or enroll in a flexible reimbursement account (FRA). If you take no action, your health plan and membership will remain the same, but current FRAs will end on June 30. Remember that you must enroll in an FRA each year.

Questions? [Contact Human Resources.](#)

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## Horseback Riding at Copper Crest Farm

By Lee Beeman

On April 7th, 7A visited Copper Crest Farm. Located in Wytheville, VA, Copper Crest Farm features a riding therapy program that provides recreational therapeutic riding and driving for children and adults with physical handicaps, mental impairments and/or emotional disorders. Several local group homes go there to experience the therapeutic effects of horseback riding. The program offers specific activities and exercises associated with horseback riding and driving that help to strengthen abilities and reduce limitations of each individual participant.

Safety is top priority at Copper Crest. Only gentle, well-trained horses are used and participants are taught to move carefully around the horses. Special safety equipment is used when and where needed. Trained volunteers walk beside or ride with the participants whenever there is a need for assistance. All riding is carefully supervised by the program instructor.

Individuals from 7A had a wonderful day at this facility and they plan on going back as soon as they can. The staff at Copper Crest was more than willing to help, and the clients were very comfortable with them.

## SWVTC Athletes Participate in Special Olympics

By Teresa Montgomery

Athletes from SWVTC participated in the Area 9 Special Olympics held on Saturday, April 12, at Radford University. After a cool, breezy morning, the sun finally came out and everyone enjoyed a great day.

Tuesday, April 15 each athlete who participated received an official Special Olympic T-Shirt and enjoyed refreshments at the Recognition Night.



Photo by Dale Woods, Ed. D., Director

*Angela (right) celebrated with a party on 5B April 24. She is moving to New Horizon. Joyce Vaughan (left) has worked with Angela for 28 years. The party also welcomed Kayla from New Horizon to 5B.*



## Volunteers Honored

By Deborah Lowe/Petti Cash

Thursday, April 17, 2008, SWVTC honored sponsors and volunteers in an evening celebration and ice cream social.

The Lions of Virginia District 24-F received the well-deserved honor of Volunteers of the Year. The Lions have sponsored SWVTC for the past 29 years. They have given over \$300,000 in monetary donations and have provided the cable/satellite TV that we enjoy across campus. They have generously donated the stage curtains for the gym, popcorn machines, AV equipment, a piano, gait trainers, etc. John Jones has been instrumental in the Lions work with the Training Center throughout the years. He and Ray Patrick jointly received the special award of Stellar Volunteer.



*Carl Tolley, left, Vice-District Governor of Lions Clubs of 24-F displays the "Volunteers of the Year" certificate while Dr. Woods presents the "Stellar Volunteer" award to John Jones and Ray Patrick, co-chairmen of the SWVTC project.*

Larry South, Hillsville Town Manager, also received an award for Volunteer of the Year. He has supported the Training Center for many years, including donating Christmas presents to one of the units. He personally went to all the downtown businesses in Hillsville and solicited

gifts and gift cards for the Center. He represents all the businesses in Hillsville who have contributed to the residents' quality of life.

Forty-eight sponsors have adopted a resident living unit. At least 600 members of the community have gone out of their way to give us the extras we enjoy. Included in this list are: the Morgan Shepherd Trust Fund, Mike Lupien of Richmond, community churches, Girl Scouts,



*Residents who have volunteered their time in the community receive medals and certificates.*

Leo's Club, Carroll County Intermediate School's FFA Club, Women's Clubs of Hillsville and Floyd, and many others.

The American Red Cross, the Twin County Humane Society, and others have worked in partnership with residents in the work program. Many civic organizations sponsor, donate, and share with SWVTC.

Many area churches and individual members share their music and message with residents. Many come to entertain, including local fire departments, rescue squads, EMS services, school bands, the Kazim Hillbillies, the Antique Car Club and many individuals in the community.

*Continued on next page*





*At the Volunteer Reception April 17, SWVTC gym was filled with lots of beautiful decorations, a very nice crowd, and lots of ice cream with all the toppings.*



*Guida Poe contributed the use of her beverage cart, made by her and her husband, for the event.*

*Volunteers received these beautiful geraniums from SWVTC's greenhouse as door prizes.*



## Special Thanks from Petti Cash, Volunteer Services Director

Thanks to the efforts of many who helped make this annual event fun for guests and residents. To the staff persons who worked behind the scenes getting the residents to the gym – a huge applause for your efforts. The residents looked absolutely fabulous! Special thanks go to Rose Dalton, Guida Poe, Shannon Underwood and newcomers, Carol Stiltner and Karen Bourne from New Horizons. Calvin Griffith and Linda Jennings were a tremendous help with their residents. Shannon Brown and Tammy Caudill were both assets and Tommy Caudill was a lifesaver! Also special thanks to music intern, Erin Sewell.

Kudos goes to Mike Deskins and Tommy Stout for helping set up the gym and to Building and Grounds for their help in putting the gym back in order.

Thanks to Parke Quesenberry's help with our hosts and hostesses and a sincere thank you to Rhonda Frazier and Ricky Bedwell for their aid in trying to make the program run smoothly. They had a lot of residents who were receiving awards. Tracy Burcham, Sharon Melton, Darla Buckley, Jeanette Leftwich, Lisa Wensil, Deborah Lowe, Kim Hawks, and Pam Asbury were instrumental in the planning, decorating and coordination of this huge undertaking and it was only with their efforts that we succeeded in honoring our volunteers and residents. Deborah Lowe's daughter, Grace, became an unwitting but most helpful volunteer, scooping ice cream with the team. Sandy Reavis baked cookies, as well as 5D who came through at the last minute with some home baked goodies.

Thanks to Bryant Neff and to Sidney Beamer for all their support. Bryant was invaluable to SWVTC residents and their volunteering efforts. Through his initiative, thirty-seven residents were recognized and awarded medals and certificates for their approximately 122 hours of volunteerism.

Other thanks to Joy Caviness and the food service department. They hauled a lot of ice and ice cream for us! And to the residents: you did a fabulous job! All of you looked terrific and were gracious and patient throughout the program. You made us all proud!

## College of Direct Support

By Beverly Webb

The College of Direct Support is a real benefit for the employees of SWVTC. To date, 271 SWVTC employees have completed the entire program.

**ANY EMPLOYEE** who completes the entire 19 course program receives a \$25 gift card from Wal-Mart. In addition to the gift card, the completion of the entire curriculum is equal to 7 hours of college credit. This college credit can be applied toward a variety of college degrees and can also be used to renew Teacher Certification. If additional information is needed on this, please contact Karen Poe.

Staff persons that have taken the College of Direct Support courses have reported the information in the courses is relevant and useful. Staff can continue to use the College of Direct Support site for training. At least two new courses will be released and added to the site each year.

**Congratulations** to all of the employees that have completed the College of Direct Support!

## DSP Career Pathway Program

By Beverly Webb

Employees at SWVTC in a Direct Service Associate role have the opportunity to enroll in the statewide Direct Service Associate Career Pathway as of April 1, 2008. This pathway was developed by a statewide group led by a couple of DMHMRSAS Central Office staff. It was designed to improve client services, reduce turnover, and create an improved learning environment for staff working directly with clients.

Participation in the Pathway is totally voluntary and initiated by the employee. To be eligible for acceptance in the Pathway, the employee must have 12 months of service in a qualified DSA role,

have successfully completed the probationary period, have no active written notices, and must have a current performance evaluation rating of contributor or higher.

Any DSA who had completed the 15 modules of the College of Direct Support that are a part of the Level I requirement of the Pathway by April 15, 2008, and who met the criteria listed above as of April 15, 2008, will be receiving a bonus. The bonus amount has not yet been determined, but will be paid out in June 2008. At SWVTC there were 192 Direct Service Associates who qualified for this bonus payout. Central Office expects to pay a similar bonus in December 2008 for those DSAs who satisfy the above criteria after April 15, 2008. The cutoff date for the December payout is proposed to be October 1, 2008. Central Office anticipates that a bonus payout for completing the CDS requirement may occur twice annually.

Funding for the DSA Career Pathway is not guaranteed. However, there are non-monetary benefits that can be realized by the DSA and the facility. Central Office has indicated that they will continue to attempt to secure funding for this program.

## Safety Awards

By Michele Laird, Risk Manager

Congratulations to 5B, 6B, 8A, 3A, 3B and 3D residents and staff for the safety achievements for the 01/01/2008 to 03/31/2008 reporting period!

Cottage 5B received three awards in a row! They received a \$50 gift card and are planning a party to celebrate. Cottage 6B received two awards in a row. They enjoyed ice cream cake to celebrate. Thank you all for your dedication and hard work!

*See Page 8 for pictures...*



## CommonHealth



### ***National Employee Health and Fitness Day***

SWVTC Group Walk

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>

Walk anytime that is convenient for you.

Come to Human Resources to sign in  
and receive your water, fruit, and incentive.

**Incentive is a keychain.**



### ***Back Saver Challenge due***

April challenge must be turned  
in no later than May 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Incentive is Back Massager.**



### **JMH BLOOD DRIVE**



Thursday, May 1

10 a.m. till 3 p.m.

**Johnston Memorial Hospital Blood Bank** is one of only two self sufficient, hospital based, blood donor collection centers in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The vast majority of the blood products collected here remain in this area, supporting the patients of Southwest Virginia. **JMH also is the main provider of blood in Smyth, Carroll, and Grayson counties** - serving Twin County Regional Hospital and Smyth County Community Hospital.



### **SAD BUT TRUE!**

Our CommonHealth Regional Coordinator, Bev Haddock, will be leaving us July 1, 2008. She has been a good friend and health resource to Southwestern Virginia Training Center for many years. She will be greatly missed. We appreciate all she has done.

### **WEIGHT WATCHERS**

Thursdays at 5:15

at SWVTC

in Classroom # 1



### **FUTURE MOMS**

Expecting?

One of the best things  
you can do  
for yourself and your baby  
is to enroll in **Future Moms**.  
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Website [www.commonhealthva.com](http://www.commonhealthva.com)

### **A Bunch of Losers!!!**

An At-Work Weight Watchers group started on February 28<sup>th</sup> at the Training Center. The class is being taught by Connie Reese. As of last Thursday, the group had lost 253 pounds! The class shares many laughs, recipes, and great tips for losing weight!

**Cumulative total lost 253 lbs.**



## *Keeping Up with Coworkers ...*

### *THANKS!*

We would like to thank **all Unit Nurses, Infirmiry Nurses and Night Shift Nurses** for their continued hard work and dedication to SWVTC residents. With the shortage of staff, illness and the flu, we know it's been an even more difficult task of late, but as usual, you all handled the challenges very well. We would like to commend you on a job well done!!

Cathy Travis  
Carole Everhart  
Geneva Parker  
Dorothy Stoneman

The **Community Services Department** would like to thank the **New Horizons staff** for their luncheon to recognize Social Work Month. The food was great and the CS staff members who were able to make it enjoyed spending some time with New Horizon staff. (And thank you for the to-go plate as well!!) It was very thoughtful of you and we appreciated it very much!!

Jean Felts

From the bottom of my heart I thank each and every one of you for the prayers, cards and support during the time I was out with my mother. And I don't want to leave out the plants and trees; again thank you all. Those days that I was gone seemed endless but thanks to you all and your prayers I am fine and my mother is now pain free and also hopefully fine in heaven. All of you are very special and wonderful in my eyes and heart. I will always remember you in my prayers and if you ever need me I will try my best to listen, care and help all I can. Again, from the bottom of my heart and all my love I thank all of you and I'm back and fine.

John Wells

I would like to sincerely thank all those who gave money, sent cards, and expressed sympathy following the recent death of my mother.

Tom Smith

I would like to say thank you to 8B staff and residents for the beautiful flowers. Although I was on 8B for only a short time I'll never forget the friendship and teamwork that we shared. You all are a great bunch! Best of luck to you all.

Racheal Riffey

### *Comings and Goings...*

Congratulations go out for these staff:

- **Randall Morehead** for being promoted to full-time staff
- **Mary Willard** for being promoted to full-time staff
- **Mitzi Ramey** for accepting a cook position
- **Tammy Smith** for accepting a tray line position
- **Michelle Hawks** for accepting a Direct Support position

Rebecca Stone

Food Service would like to welcome back **Lynda (Gail) Edwards** from her absence.

Rebecca Stone

Best of luck and much success for the future to **Matthew Terry**. We will miss you.

Rebecca Stone

New Horizon welcomes several new staff:

**Cynthia Dauch** (3A, 2<sup>nd</sup> shift)  
**Brittany Brooks** (3C)  
**Cecilia Topping** (Bldg. 4)  
**Michelle Hawks** (3A)  
**David Nichols** (3B)

## Keeping Up with Coworkers ... (cont'd)

New Horizon sends best wishes to **Dana Martin** as she pursues new job opportunities!

Congratulations to **Carol Stiltner** and **Karen Bourne** on moving into the Physical Management Professional positions.

Calvin Griffith, New Horizon

### *Congratulations!*

Congratulations to **Amanda Frazier** on the birth of Cheyenne Leigh on April 14, 2008, weighing 7 lbs, 8 ounces, 21 inches long.

Reida Jennings, Connections

Our best wishes go to **Carrie Carpenter** in her marriage of April 19, 2008.

Reida Jennings, Connections

### *Sympathy*

Our deepest sympathy goes out to the family of **John K.**, who passed away on April 21<sup>st</sup>. John had resided on 4A for more than 20 years, and will be greatly missed by everyone.

We would like to extend heartfelt sympathy to the following staff on the loss of loved ones:

- To **Joy Caviness** on the loss of an uncle
- To **Ellen Ogle** on the loss of an uncle
- To **Judy Chappell** on the loss of her father

### *Other News*

New Horizon recently gave a very special birthday lunch at Rio Grande to **Vickie Ross** in celebration of a very special birthday. According to Calvin it was about halfway between her 40<sup>th</sup> and her 60<sup>th</sup> birthdays...

As part of March being National Social Worker's Month, New Horizon honored all Social Workers with a luncheon on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Lots of good food and fellowship were enjoyed by all!



## Safety Awards

...Continued from page 5

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